FOURTH ANNUAL

TRANSGENDER HEALTH EQUITY SYMPOSIUM

Closing Gaps in Care:
DESIGNING SYSTEMS BUILT FOR ALL

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
Erin Reed, *Erin in the Morning*

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 20, 2026

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Guerrieri Academic Commons ▪ Assembly Hall (Fourth Floor)

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Event Schedule

11:45 a.m.	**On-Site Check-In**
12:10 p.m.	**Opening Remarks**
12:35 p.m.	**Keynote Erin Reed, *Erin in the Morning*** *From the History to the Headlines: Trans Resilience in the Modern Rainbow Scare*
1:45 p.m.	**Panel:** *Hear from a variety of community members about their experiences on Delmarva.*
2:45 p.m.	**Break/Vendors**
3 p.m.	**Community Activity/Vendors**
3:30 p.m.	**Breakout Sessions** Breakout 1: *Bridging the Gap: Clinical Practice with Trans and Nonbinary Clients* **Mx. Sage Simone** (they/them), Maryland Department of Social Services Breakout 2: *Inverting School Rivalries to Create Safe Spaces for All* **Cassandra Whitaker**, trans writer and educator from Worcester County, MD Breakout 3: *Safe Spaces: Developing your Skills for Being an Ally to Trans People* **Dr. Michelle Fletcher**, Salisbury University Department of Political Science and Safe Spaces Planning Team Breakout 4: *The Heart and Science of Becoming: Trans Lives and Celebratory Allyship* **Dr. S. Wilson Cole**, Director of Research, Trans Maryland and Queery Research Consulting
4:30 p.m.	**Transgender Day of Remembrance Vigil**
4:55 p.m.	**Closing Remarks**

Keynote Speaker



Erin Reed

Erin Reed (she/her) is a transgender journalist based in Washington, D.C. She tracks LGBTQ+ legislation around the United States for her subscription newsletter, ErinInTheMorning.com. Her work has been cited by the AP, Reuters, *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and many more major media outlets. You can follow her on bluesky @erininthemorning.com

SYMPOSIUM VALUES

We believe:

- Access to affirming healthcare is a fundamental human right.
- Transgender people have a right to shape the training of healthcare providers and give providers direction on how to best meet their health needs.
- Healthcare professionals have an ethical obligation to advance health equity for transgender and gender nonconforming people.
- As educational institutions and as places of innovation, university settings play a vital role in advancing health equity for transgender and gender nonconforming people.

Distinguished Panelists

Grayson Chamberlain

Grayson Chamberlain is a born and raised Midwesterner who relocated to the Eastern Shore a few summers ago with his partner. He has been out as a trans man for seven years and has been a proud cat dad for four years. Grayson currently works in a crisis management role, supporting those struggling with mental health issues, substance and alcohol abuse disorders, and housing instability. He has done this work across different organizations for over three years now, coming from a previous position in Emergency Room registration. When Grayson is not working, he enjoys playing Dungeon and Dragons, video games, attending pride events on the Eastern Shore, and discovering new seafood dishes to enjoy.

Kaci Jo McKinney

Hi friends. I am Kaci Jo. The thing is, writing my bio in the third person felt wrong, so ... first person it is. I was born and raised in Montana but joined the Air Force in 1998 because it felt like the best way out of my small town. I spent 15 of my 24 years overseas. I saw the end of Don't Ask, Don't Tell in 2011 and the transgender military ban lifted in 2016, reinstated in 2019, and lifted again in 2021. I closed my military career in the best possible way: retiring honorably, authentically, and supported by my wingmen at Lajes Field in Terceira, Portugal, before planting roots on the Eastern Shore. After 27 years in logistics and project management, I returned to grad school. I am now a social work student at UMB; my primary concentration is clinical social work and a secondary LPSC concentration. My first placement was with Peace of Mind Mental Health Services in Easton, where I helped develop no-cost, affirming group services for gender-diverse clients. This year, I am at the Johns Hopkins Emerge Gender Diversity Clinic. My goal is to help make care easier to access, less frustrating to navigate, and more affirming for folks with no idea where to start.

Donovan Jensen Mendoza

Donovan Jensen Mendoza is a transgender man, disabled veteran, father, and creative entrepreneur living on Maryland's Eastern Shore. His experiences navigating gender transition, chronic illness, disability, and parenthood have given him a unique perspective on the importance of accessible, compassionate, and inclusive healthcare. As an ambulatory wheelchair user living with multiple chronic health conditions, Donovan understands the challenges of navigating healthcare systems while managing intersecting identities and medical needs. His personal journey with gender-affirming care has further shaped his understanding of the barriers transgender individuals

may encounter when seeking appropriate treatment, particularly in underserved communities. Beyond healthcare, Donovan embraces his identity through creativity, family, and community involvement. As an artist and small business owner, he values individuality, self-expression, and the freedom to live authentically. Donovan believes that meaningful progress in transgender healthcare begins with listening to the people directly affected by existing systems. He recognizes that transgender experiences are diverse and that effective care must address each person's individual circumstances. Through his participation in the symposium, Donovan hopes to encourage thoughtful conversations, challenge assumptions, and help healthcare professionals better understand the importance of treating every patient with dignity, respect, and compassion.

Sage Simone

Sage Simone, LMSW, (they/them) is a licensed master social worker and behavioral health professional. Sage's clinical experience includes working with LGBTQIA+ individuals, adolescents and families. Sage's professional interests center on behavioral health, social justice, and culturally responsive care. Their work has included research on LGBTQ+ student experiences, diversity policy development, and community engagement. Sage also volunteers with Point of Pride assisting trans and non-binary individuals with access to grants and direct assistance. Sage has also contributed to interdisciplinary initiatives focused on transgender healthcare and the needs of underserved populations. Recognized with Salisbury University's 2024-2025 M.S.W. Outstanding Service Award, Sage is committed to advancing equitable access to behavioral health services and fostering inclusive, person-centered practices through clinical work, research, and community engagement.

Speakers

Dr. S. Wilson Cole

S. Wilson Cole (a.k.a. Will, he/they) is a professor, scientist, activist, writer, educator, husband, dad, and queer trans man. They hold an M.A. and M.P.H. from Yale University and Ph.D. in public health and M.A. in writing from Johns Hopkins. After a long global health career living abroad in Tanzania, he realized he was trans, moved to Maryland, and shifted his focus to LGBTQ issues. He runs a business, Queery Research, specializing in transgender health research, and teaches LGBTQ health at Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. In an online newsletter, *Your Trans Cousin*, he translates health science and humanizes trans lives with "a personal touch on trans issues, backed by science." His writing about growing up as a Mormon girl and post-transition healing won the David Everett Award for Outstanding Thesis (Nonfiction) at JHU. His essays have been nominated for a Pushcart Prize and a Monarch Queer Literary Award. Over a dozen essays are published in literary journals *(The Portland Review, Welter, Jarnal), online magazines (Cosmopolitan, Another Jane Pratt Thing, Open Secrets)*, and two forthcoming anthologies, in addition to his 70+ peer-reviewed academic publications and book chapters on LGBTQ health.

Dr. Michelle Fletcher

Dr. Michelle Fletcher graduated from Southern Illinois University Carbondale, earning a master's degree in public administration and a doctoral degree in political science. Her areas of specialization are American government, public policy, and public administration. Dr. Fletcher joined Salisbury University in fall 2021 as an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science. She teaches public policy, public administration, and government institutions. Dr. Fletcher's research has examined the effects of social identity in public sector organizations and American politics. She studied cultural competence levels among college campus law enforcement agencies. Her research agenda includes work examining the use of political rhetoric during presidential campaigns through the lens of Critical Race Theory (CRT). Her dissertation research examined the impact of multiplicative models of social identity and sexuality as determinates of worker turnover intention. She serves on the leadership team of Safe Spaces and sits on the Executive Council of the University System of Maryland Women's Forum (USMWF). She has served as the faculty advisor of the SU student chapter of ICMA. Dr. Fletcher regularly serves as a speaker and lecturer, sharing her research, expertise, and passion for advocacy through collaborations with PACE and community organizations.

Speakers

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Cassandra Whitaker

Cassandra Whitaker (she/they) is a trans writer from rural Virginia. Whit's work has been published in *Michigan Quarterly Review, Foglifter, Conjunctions, Shenandoah, Image/Out, Lambda Literary Review*, and other places. Her first full-length collection of poems, *Wolf Devouring A Wolf Devouring A Wolf*, was published by Jackleg Press in 2025. She is a member of the National Book Critics Circle, the NEA LGTBQ+ caucus, and she serves on the board of Shore Pride Alliance. Her work as a theatre and LGBTQIA+ youth educator has been recognized by the Maryland State Arts Council and Governor Wes Moore. She teaches at Pocomoke High School in Worcester County, MD.

TICT Planning Team

Project Lead:

Dr. Michèle Schlehofer (she/her), Professor, Salisbury University Psychology Department

Planning Team Members:

Dr. Hannah Ginn (she/her), Assistant Professor, School of Social Work

Dr. Dan Green (he/him), Assistant Professor, School of Social Work

Dr. Becky Anthony (she/her), Associate Professor, School of Social Work

Elizabeth Workman (she/her), Social Sciences Librarian, SU Libraries

Kate Culhane-Suluai (she/her), Program Manager, University of Delaware's Partnership for Healthy Communities

Willow Nyland* (they/them), Undergraduate student pursuing a dual degree in philosophy and psychology with minors in Asian studies and disability studies

Elliott Albert (he/they) SU MSW student and intern at MidShore Meals til Monday

**Also a member of the Community Advisory Committee*

Community Advisory Committee:

Tina Jones (she/her), Delmarva Pride Center

A. Rand (they/them), Staff Attorney, Shore Legal Access

Blush Autumn Rain (she/her), CUPS, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Salisbury, LGBT Connections, Salisbury PFLAG

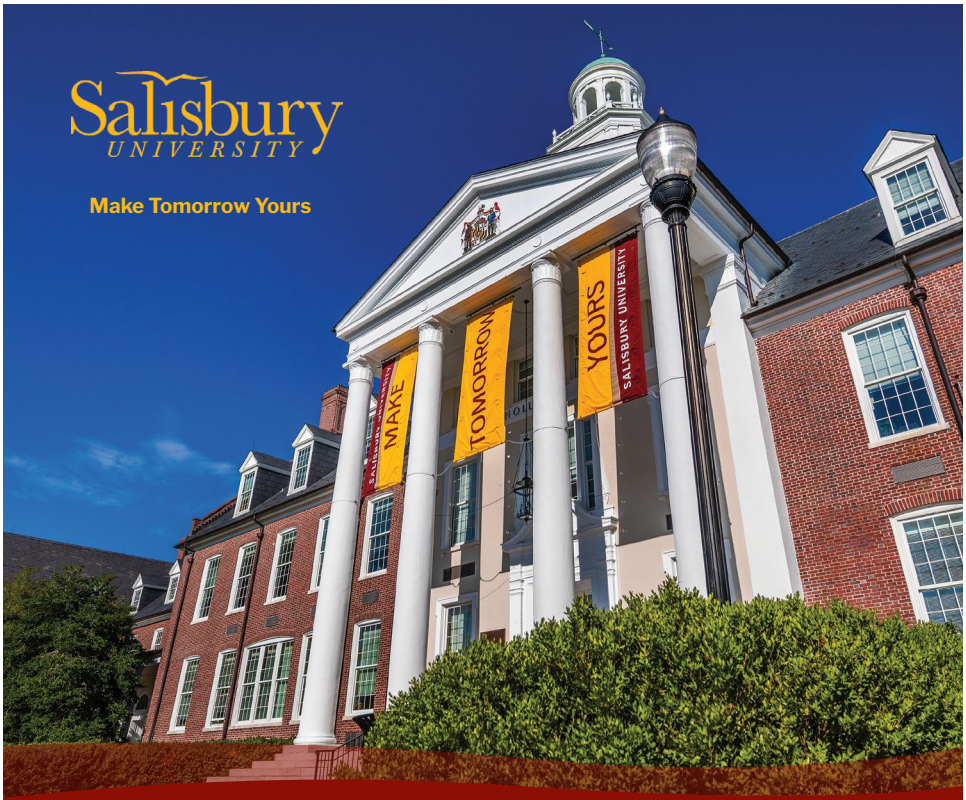
Maddie Lampron (she/her), Community Member

The Transgender Interprofessional Care Team thanks our donors, speakers, vendors and volunteers for making today's event possible. We believe that access to high-quality, affirming health care is a basic human right. Thank you for sharing our vision and for your help in making our fourth symposium a success.

Our community is only as healthy as our most marginalized members. We hope today's symposium inspires our attendees to engage in continual self-education and increased advocacy for our transgender loved ones.

Sincerely,

Salisbury University Interprofessional Transgender Care Team



Be a **Tomorrow Maker**

We call them Tomorrow Makers. Our students. Our faculty. Our staff. Our alumni. Because the tomorrows they create are bigger and bolder and make the world better for everyone.

It's more than a GPA. It's opportunities, and a mindset. It's what sets us apart. And it will set you apart. Right here in Salisbury, you'll be empowered to make your tomorrow unlike any other.

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Dr. Laurie Henry
Dean, Seidel School of Education

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HONORABLE MENTION: AMY AND JIM JONES

Interprofessional education (IPE) is vital to the changing landscape of health and human service work. Healthcare today encompasses not only physical health but also psychological, social and spiritual well-being. This holistic approach is especially critical in gender-affirming care, where transgender individuals often face barriers to both treatment and provider environments that are inclusive, competent and sensitive. Interdisciplinary training offers a valuable space for individuals with lived experience and professionals across disciplines to collaborate. This shared commitment to learning from one another is essential to reducing disparities and delivering affirming, high-quality care.

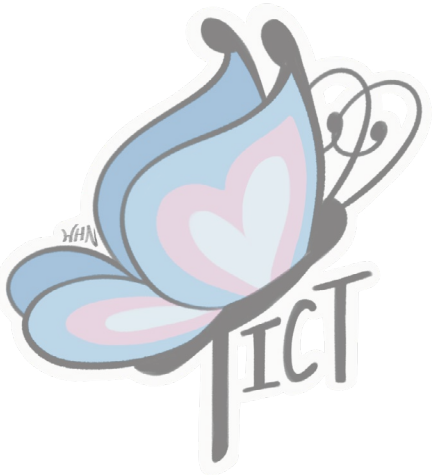
EVALUATION SURVEY

The Transgender Interprofessional Care Team is asking for your feedback on the Transgender Health Equity Symposium. As an attendee, you are invited to take a confidential online survey that will take about 6-10 minutes.

Participation is voluntary and will not affect your relationship with Salisbury University. You must be at least 18 years old to participate. Your responses will remain confidential, and you may skip any questions you're uncomfortable answering.

For questions, contact Dr. Michele Schlehofer at mmschlehofer@salisbury.edu or 410-677-0034. If you have concerns about the study, contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research at 410-548-3549 or toll-free at 1-888-543-0148. The study is approved by Salisbury University's IRB under protocol number 267.

If you do not wish to participate, please do not complete the survey. If you agree, please proceed with the survey. Thank you for your feedback.



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